

---

E-ALERT is compiled based on a service we receive from the Department of State's Office of International Information Programs. We are sending it to alert you of the latest issues and debates in the United States.

It covers (1) U.S. Federal government documents, especially those from executive branch departments and those from the Congressional branch; (2) policy briefs from major private think tanks; (3) major reports from professional associations; and (4) articles.

Please contact the Information Resource Center if you have problem retrieving any of the documents listed. To cancel this service, please reply to the present message and type "unsubscribe" as the text of your message.

---

## Title Index

- [Item#1](#) China's New Silk Road: Implications for the US
- [Item#2](#) India's Modi Turns the Tables on China
- [Item#3](#) Iran's Foreign Policy
- [Item#4](#) From Cooperation to Competition – The Future of U.S.-Russian Relations
- [Item#5](#) Future of Two Unions, the EU and the UK, Hangs in Balance
- [Item#6](#) Public Continues to Back U.S. Drone Attacks
- [Item#7](#) Country Analysis Briefs: China
- [Item#8](#) As Supply Drops, China's Factory Workers Are More Restive
- [Item#9](#) What's the Difference?—Comparing U.S. and Chinese Trade Data
- [Item#10](#) Free Trade Agreements Seen as Good for U.S., But Concerns Persist
- [Item#11](#) Americans' Attitudes About Privacy, Security and Surveillance
- [Item#12](#) The Future of Internet Governance: Should the U.S. Relinquish Its Authority Over ICANN?
- [Item#13](#) From Telephone to the Web: The Challenge of Mode of Interview Effects in Public Opinion Polls
- [Item#14](#) Tesla's Home Battery—An Electricity Storage Breakthrough?
- [Item#15](#) English Proficiency on the Rise Among Latinos

\*\*\*\*\*

## Reports

### Item#1

**China's New Silk Road: Implications for the US.** YaleGlobal. Shuaihua Wallace Cheng. May 28, 2015.

China's response to the so-called U.S. pivot to Asia is to expand influence in Asia. Known as the "One Belt, One Road," the modern-day Silk Road network "will not only enhance 'five connections' – trade, infrastructure, investment, capital and people – it will create a community with 'shared interests, destiny and responsibilities,'" explains Cheng. China hopes to diversify exports, contribute to development in Eurasia, increase access to food and energy, lessen dependence on the U.S. dollar and improve representation of developing nations in global affairs. Cheng suggests that the United States assess China's embrace of global responsibility to determine which initiatives represent a force for good.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/china%E2%80%99s-new-silk-road-implications-us> [HTML format, various paging].

### Item#2

**India's Modi Turns the Tables on China.** YaleGlobal. Harsh V. Pant. May 26, 2015.

India's Prime Minister Narendra Modi, in office for just a year, approaches China with new confidence. During a visit to China, the prime minister was candid about India's strategic distrust and its determination to build new ties with other powers including the United States, Japan and Australia. Border disputes are a major obstacle for the two nations "realizing full potential," in Modi's words, of their partnership. During one speech, he urged "that our relationships with other countries do not become a source of concern for each other." Author Harsh V. Pant noted, "This is a shift in Indian traditional defensiveness vis-à-vis China, underscoring a recalibration in policy by squarely putting the blame for stalemate in bilateral ties on China's doorsteps." Pant concludes that Modi is deftly signaling a willingness to resolve border disputes, ease tensions and work with Beijing on cultural and economic ties. Much of Asian prosperity depends on China's response to the India's call.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/india%E2%80%99s-modi-turns-tables-china> [HTML format, various paging].

### Item#3

**Iran's Foreign Policy.** Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Kenneth Katzman. May 5, 2015.

Iran's foreign policy is product of many (and sometimes conflicting) factors: the ideology of Iran's Islamic revolution; Iranian leadership's perception of threats to the regime and to the country; long-standing Iranian national interests; and the interaction of the Iranian regime's various factions and constituencies. Some U.S. observers believe that Iran wishes to overturn a power structure in the Middle East that Iran asserts favors the United States, Israel, and Sunni Muslim Arab regimes; such observers interpret Iran's foreign policy in this light. Others interpret Iran's foreign policy as far more practical than ideological—an attempt to protect Iran from U.S. or other efforts to invade or intimidate Iran or to change its regime.

Meanwhile, Iran couches its support for Shiite and other Islamist movements as support for an “oppressed” underclass.

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/mideast/R44017.pdf> [PDF format, 38 pages, 446.5 KB].

#### Item#4

**From Cooperation to Competition – The Future of U.S.-Russian Relations.** Strategic Studies Institute. Gregory K. Anderson et al. May 28, 2015.

Russian aggression in 2014 caught U.S. policy and strategy off guard, forcing reactive measures and reevaluation of the U.S. approach toward Russia. Moscow employed nonlinear methodologies and operated just beneath traditional thresholds of conflict to take full advantage of U.S. and NATO policy and process limitations. The report presents four key considerations for future policy and strategy.

<http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=1283> [HTML format with a link to the PDF file].

#### Item#5

**Future of Two Unions, the EU and the UK, Hangs in Balance.** YaleGlobal. Alistair Burnett. May 12, 2015.

Voters in the United Kingdom surprised the world by re-electing Prime Minister David Cameron, whose ability to win concessions from the European Union could affect Britain’s influence abroad. “The Conservatives went into the election promising to renegotiate Britain’s relationship with the EU and then hold a referendum on continuing membership by the end of 2017,” explains Alistair Burnett. Cameron has suggested that, if the EU makes adjustments on open borders and immigration, he would join the business community in campaigning for the UK to remain an EU member. But the electorate may vote in the referendum to withdraw, thus dividing the UK. That’s because the Scottish National Party, which made gains in the election, supports sticking with the EU. Burnett concludes, “A UK out of the EU, shorn of Scotland, would consolidate the perception in the world’s major capitals that Cameron is taking the country down an isolationist path.”

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/after-election-future-two-unions-%E2%80%93-eu-and-uk-%E2%80%93-hangs-balance> [HTML format, various paging].

#### Item#6

**Public Continues to Back U.S. Drone Attacks.** Tew Research Center. May 28, 2015.

The public continues to support U.S. drone strikes targeting extremists in Pakistan and elsewhere, despite ongoing concerns that drone attacks endanger lives of innocent civilians. The survey finds that 58% approve of the U.S. conducting missile strikes from drones to target extremists in such countries as Pakistan, Yemen and Somalia. About a third (35%) disapprove of U.S. drone attacks. While men approve of drone attacks by more than two-to-one (67% to 28%), the balance of opinion is much narrower among women. Half (50%) of women approve of the use of drones to target extremists, while 42% disapprove.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.people-press.org/files/2015/05/5-28-15-Foreign-Policy-release.pdf> [PDF format, 17 pages, 465.71 KB].

#### Item#7

**Country Analysis Briefs: China.** U.S. Energy Information Administration. May 14, 2015.

China's robust economic growth and thirst for energy resources in the past decade has driven it to become the top global energy consumer. China has the largest oil and gas production in the Asia-Pacific region and the largest coal production in the world, but the country's escalating energy demand, albeit at slower growth levels in the past few years, increases its reliance on imports and need to secure more energy supplies. China is also in the midst of balancing its need for energy security with environmental concerns and is implementing economic and energy sector reforms to provide more sustainable and long-term growth.

<http://www.eia.gov/countries/analysisbriefs/China/china.pdf> [PDF format, 44 pages, 1.92 MB].

#### Item#8

**As Supply Drops, China's Factory Workers Are More Restive.** YaleGlobal. Anita Chan. May 21, 2015.

Migrant workers in South China are increasingly more assertive. A once relatively compliant workforce is staging more and bigger strikes prompting authorities to escalate suppression. Chan analyzes the internal and external forces behind the unrest. Labor activism is most intense in Guangdong Province, near Hong Kong with its NGOs that spread the word about illegal labor practices. Chan warns that unrest could emerge in Guangdong if local authorities do not address the workforce's concerns about the lack of enforcement of China's labor laws.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://yaleglobal.yale.edu/content/supply-drops-china%E2%80%99s-factory-workers-are-more-restive> [HTML format, various paging].

#### Item#9

**What's the Difference?—Comparing U.S. and Chinese Trade Data.** Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Michael F. Martin. May 4, 2015.

The size of the U.S. bilateral trade deficit with China has been and continues to be an important issue in bilateral trade relations. Some Members of Congress view the deficit as a sign of unfair economic policies in China, and have introduced legislation seeking to redress the perceived competitive disadvantage China's policies have created for U.S. exporters. There is a large and growing difference between the official trade statistics released by the United States and the People's Republic of China. According to the United States, the 2014 bilateral trade deficit with China was \$342.6 billion. According to China, its trade surplus with the United States was \$237.0 billion—\$105.6 billion less. The paper examines the differences in the trade data from the two nations.

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RS22640.pdf> [PDF format, 11 pages, 257.9 KB].

#### Item#10

**Free Trade Agreements Seen as Good for U.S., But Concerns Persist.** Pew Research Center. May 27, 2015.

As Congress considers a major new trade pact with Asia, there is broad public agreement that international free trade agreements are good for the United States. But fewer Americans express positive views of the impact of trade deals on their personal finances. And, as in the past, far more say free trade agreements lead to lower wages and job losses in the United States than say they result in higher wages and job gains.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

<http://www.people-press.org/files/2015/05/5-27-15-Trade-release.pdf> [PDF format, 15 pages, 538.82 KB].

#### Item#11

**Americans' Attitudes About Privacy, Security and Surveillance.** Pew Research Center. Mary Madden and Lee Rainie. May 20, 2015.

The cascade of reports following the June 2013 government surveillance revelations by NSA contractor Edward Snowden have brought new attention to debates about how best to preserve Americans' privacy in the digital age. At the same time, the public has been awash with news stories detailing security breaches at major retailers, health insurance companies and financial institutions. These events – and the doubts they inspired – have contributed to a cloud of personal “data insecurity” that now looms over many Americans' daily decisions and activities. Some find these developments deeply troubling and want limits put in place, while others do not feel these issues affect them personally. Others believe that widespread monitoring can bring some societal benefits in safety and security or that innocent people should have “nothing to hide.”

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

[http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2015/05/Privacy-and-Security-Attitudes-5.19.15\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.pewinternet.org/files/2015/05/Privacy-and-Security-Attitudes-5.19.15_FINAL.pdf) [PDF format, 50 pages, 1.09 MB].

#### Item#12

**The Future of Internet Governance: Should the U.S. Relinquish Its Authority Over ICANN?** Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Lennard G. Kruger. May 5, 2015.

Currently, the U.S. government retains limited authority over the Internet's domain name system, primarily through the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority (IANA) functions contract between the National Telecommunications and Information Administration (NTIA) and the Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN). By virtue of the IANA functions contract, the NTIA exerts a legacy authority and stewardship over ICANN, and arguably has more influence over ICANN and the domain name system (DNS) than other national governments. On March 14, 2014, NTIA announced the intention to transition its stewardship role and procedural authority over key Internet domain name functions to the global Internet multistakeholder community. To accomplish this transition, NTIA has asked ICANN to convene interested global Internet stakeholders to develop a transition proposal. NTIA

has stated that it will not accept any transition proposal that would replace the NTIA role with a government-led or an intergovernmental organization solution.

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R44022.pdf> [PDF format, 22 pages, 493.01 KB].

#### Item#13

**From Telephone to the Web: The Challenge of Mode of Interview Effects in Public Opinion Polls.** Pew Research Center. May 13, 2015.

Among the most striking trends in the field of survey research in the past two decades is the shift from interviewer-administered to self-administered surveys. Fueled by the growth of the internet, self-administration as a survey mode presents a mixture of opportunities and challenges to the field. Self-administered surveys tend to be less expensive and to provide ways of asking questions that are difficult or impossible to ask in an interviewer-administered survey. But the results from self-administered and interviewer-administered surveys are sometimes different. This difference is called a mode effect, a difference in responses to a survey question attributable to the mode in which the question is administered.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

[http://www.pewresearch.org/files/2015/05/2015-05-13\\_mode-study\\_REPORT.pdf](http://www.pewresearch.org/files/2015/05/2015-05-13_mode-study_REPORT.pdf) [PDF format, 48 pages, 1.69 MB].

#### Item#14

**Tesla's Home Battery—An Electricity Storage Breakthrough?** Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Richard J. Campbell. May 4, 2015.

Cost-effective electricity storage has long been a kind of “Holy Grail” for the electric power sector. Such storage technology could have multiple benefits for electricity consumers. It can serve as a temporary source of backup power to maintain on-site electric service in the event of a utility power blackout. It can be used to improve the availability of (“firm up”) electricity generated from intermittent renewable sources such as solar and wind. It can also be used to shift end-user electricity loads from costly peak hours to lower cost off-peak hours, which can level regional generation profiles and lower customer electric bills. On April 30, 2015, Tesla Motors announced plans for a suite of Tesla Energy lithium-ion batteries scalable for use by homeowners, commercial end-users, and electric utilities.

<https://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/IN10271.pdf> [PDF format, 2 pages, 124.3 KB].

#### Item#15

**English Proficiency on the Rise Among Latinos.** Pew Research Center. Jens Manuel Krogstad et al. May 12, 2015.

A record 33.2 million Hispanics in the U.S. speak English proficiently, according to a new Pew Research Center analysis of U.S. Census Bureau data.<sup>1</sup> In 2013, this group made up 68% of all Hispanics ages 5 and older, up from 59% in 2000. At the same time that the share of Latinos who speak English proficiently is growing, the share that speaks Spanish at home has been declining over the last 13 years. In 2013, 73% of Latinos ages 5 and older said they speak Spanish at home, down from 78% who said the same in 2000. Despite this decline, a record 35.8 million Hispanics speak Spanish at home, a number that has

continued to increase as the nation's Hispanic population has grown. These shifts coincide with the rise of U.S.-born Hispanics as a share of the nation's Hispanic population, and the slowdown in immigration to the U.S. from Latin America.

[Note: contains copyrighted material].

[http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2015/05/2015-05-12\\_hispanics-english-proficiency\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.pewhispanic.org/files/2015/05/2015-05-12_hispanics-english-proficiency_FINAL.pdf) [PDF format, 14 pages, 420.57 KB].

**Information Resource Center**

**Beijing American Center**

**Public Affairs Section, U.S. Embassy Beijing**

**Tel: (86-10) 6597-3242**

**Email: [ircbeijing@state.gov](mailto:ircbeijing@state.gov)**

**Web Site: <http://beijing.usembassy-china.org.cn/irc.html>**